

FORM RE-CONSTRUCTED: June 13, 1975

Form 10-300  
(Rev. 6-72)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Kansas
COUNTY:	Sedgwick
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY DATE	

**1. NAME**

COMMON:	Wichita City Hall
AND/OR HISTORIC:	

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:			
204 South Main			
CITY OR TOWN:		CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT:	
Wichita		no. 4, Garner Shriver	
STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Kansas	67202	Sedgwick	173

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:	City of Wichita
STREET AND NUMBER:	204 South Main
CITY OR TOWN:	Wichita
STATE:	Kansas
CODE	67202
	20

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC:	Register of Deeds
STREET AND NUMBER:	Sedgwick County Courthouse
CITY OR TOWN:	Wichita
STATE	Kansas
CODE	67203
	20

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:	None
DATE OF SURVEY:	<input type="checkbox"/> Federal <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> County <input type="checkbox"/> Local
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:	
STREET AND NUMBER:	
CITY OR TOWN:	
STATE:	
CODE	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

ENTRY NUMBER

DATE

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7. DESCRIPTION	
CONDITION	(Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Fair <input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated <input type="checkbox"/> Ruins <input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered <input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered
	(Check One) <input type="checkbox"/> Moved <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE	
<p>Wichita City Hall is a three-story building with a full basement. Built of rough cut stone blocks, its walls are 18 inches thick and lined with two courses of brick. At the four corners of the structure are round towers with conical roofs, and in the center is a large square clock tower with a pyramidal tar roof. Four magnificent entrance ways are centered on the four sides between the corner towers. (However there is no door or entrance arch on the south side.) A gable roof covers each entrance way. Window styles in the building range from rectangular with arched or horizontal lintels to completely semicircular light openings.</p> <p>The stone facades are intricately detailed. The stones themselves are laid in alternating wide and narrow courses. Each floor of the towers and entry ways is separated by a course of beautifully carved stone in a leaf pattern. There is also detailed stone work along the cornice. Both the west front entry way and the northwest corner tower have false porches at the second floor level.</p> <p>The central clock tower, six stories in height, has eight keyhole-shaped arches--two on each side--plus a flat protruding arch above each pair. Each corner of the clock tower has a cylindrically shaped tower which is capped by a multilayered top resembling a crown. Similar crowns top the west entry way. Clock faces eight feet in diameter are mounted on each of the four sides. The clock tower, like all the towers, is made of rough cut stone.</p> <p>The exterior of the building is basically original except for minor repairs; however the original slate roof has been replaced by one of rubber. In 1938 an annex was built to the east of the city hall and connected to it. The annex has three stories and is also made of stone; the north front is of smooth cut stone while the other three sides are rough cut.</p> <p>The interior has been remodeled and modernized a number of times.</p> <p>Wichita City Hall, a good example of a government building designed in the "Richardsonian style," has been called a "masterpiece of the stone-cutter's art."</p>	

DATE  
ENTRY NUMBER  
HOW WAS THE DATA

# 8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- ☐ Pre-Columbian ☐ 16th Century ☐ 18th Century ☐ 20th Century  
☐ 15th Century ☐ 17th Century ☒ 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1889-1892

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |                                      |   |  |
|--|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry    | <input type="checkbox"/> Science              | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention   | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture            | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape   | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian  | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature  | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater              | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military    | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation       | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music       |   |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |                                      |   |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Construction of the Wichita City Hall was authorized by a bond election in November, 1889, and plans were formally accepted by the city council December 9, 1889. Acquisition of land at the southeast corner of Main and William began three days later. Total cost of the site was \$19,500. The architectural firm selected by the city council on December 20, was Proudfoot and Bird of Philadelphia. The building was designed in the "Richardsonian Style," which featured heavy stone work, tall Norman towers, and graceful Roman arches. The contract stipulated that Proudfoot and Bird could not charge more than five per cent of the \$70,000 allocated from public funds to complete the building. On January 1, 1890, the council selected R. Rogers as the contractor. His bid of \$61,965 was later revised to \$64,665 by mutual agreement when it was determined that Cambridge stone from Cowley county should be used instead of Augusta stone from Butler county because of the former's greater durability. The adjustment in the bid was made because of the greater distance of Cambridge from Wichita.

The cornerstone was laid in 1890 when George W. Clement was mayor. He is given much of the credit for making the city hall a reality. Construction was completed in 1892 and the building was accepted by the council on March 28. Cost of the city hall construction is variously given from \$75,000 to \$150,000. Final payments on the bonds were made in 1928. Apparently no city administration was greatly concerned about paying off the bonds and simply refunded them as they came due. It was not until Wichita changed its municipal government to the city manager form that efforts were made to pay for the building. By the time it was paid for interest costs had amounted to as much as the original cost of construction. A Seth Thomas clock and a bell were installed in the tower in 1917. The first elevator was installed in 1940, eliminating the use of the circular staircase, from first to fourth floors, under the clock tower.

One of the more interesting episodes in the building's history was the 1910 affair of the "hidden room," which was built in one corner of the electrician's room in the basement. Allegedly the fire chief and the former police chief had furnished it and used it for immoral and illegal activities. After the press published the story, the room was torn out.

As Wichita's population increased, the city hall became increasingly crowded. When remodeling projects could no longer provide adequate space, some changes were made. Various departments moved to other

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



# 9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bentley, Orsemus H., editor, History of Wichita and Sedgwick County  
(Chicago, C. F. Cooper and Co., 1910), pp. 241, 242.  
"City Hall, Built in 1892, Has Watched Wichita's Growth, Wichita Sunday Eagle, July 27, 1947.  
"Hidden Room Investigators File Official Report of Their Findings",  
Wichita Eagle, Oct. 19, 1910.  
Illuminated Resume of City of Wichita (Wichita, Chamber of Commerce,  
n.d., ca. 1900's), p. 3.

# 10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds		LATITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	LONGITUDE Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		37° 41' 24"	97° 20' 15"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 1

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

# 11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Charles Hall, Architectural Consultant; Richard Pankratz, Director, Historic Sites Survey	
ORGANIZATION: Kansas State Historical Society	DATE: Feb. 8, 1971
STREET AND NUMBER: 120 W. 10th	
CITY OR TOWN: Topeka	STATE: Kansas 66612 CODE: 20

# 12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

# NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National ☐ State ☒ Local ☐

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Nyle H. Miller

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Director, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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(Continuation Sheet) 1

STATE Kansas	
COUNTY Sedgwick	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

8.

facilities and an adjacent building was constructed to house the police department directly east of the city hall.

This massive castle-like structure with its tower and turrets has been a Wichita landmark since 1892 as well as the center of Wichita's municipal government. It is a well-kept example of the "Richardsonian Style;" not many public buildings of this type were built in the Midwest although the style was quite popular in the East.

9.

Long, Richard M., Wichita Century (Wichita, Wichita Historical Museum Association, Inc., 1970), p. 234.

"Our Historic City Hall--a Monument in Store", Wichita Beacon, Feb. 21, 1966.

"Welcome to Wichita," 8 page brochure (Wichita, n. p., 1970).

